

CHALLENGE



THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

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#Frisco500 Rebels Seize City Hall



SAN FRANCISCO, May 6—Fighting back against a series of racist killings and Mayor Ed Lee's callous indifference to a 17-day hunger strike, a member of Progressive Labor Party helped to lead 200 workers and students in a seven-hour takeover of San Francisco's City Hall. Banging on the mayor's door, protesters chanted, "Mayor Lee, you can't hide, we charge you with genocide!"

During the occupation, the protesters—women and men, Asian, Latin, Black and white—took over the area outside the mayor's door, as well as the main rotunda and eventually the entire first

floor of City Hall. We chanted, "If we don't get it, SHUT IT DOWN!" One young female fighter sang songs of liberation that echoed through the building and inspired us all to keep fighting.

It was on the 12th day of the hunger strike that the PLP member and two students decided to up the ante in pushing Lee to fire racist police chief Greg Suhr. The chief's termination was the sole demand of the hunger strikers; Suhr's kkkcops have murdered eight Black and Latin workers since 2014 (<http://www.antievictionmappingproject.net/murdermap.html>). We began organizing

other students and workers to stop playing by the rules, which meant being willing to get arrested. Our collective understanding of the importance of militant action was deepened by our week together on the strike line, reading CHALLENGE and having long debates about reform versus revolution.

All agreed that firing Suhr was a reform struggle, but that he had to go—and that this struggle could be used to move people to the left. Revolutionary politics can enter the mass reform movement only if members of PLP are involved in day-to-day struggles and bring the Party's ideas with them. One difficulty for communists is that reform groups generally place individual identity politics—namely nationalism and feminism—over collective revolutionary politics and working-class unity. In San Francisco, two of these groups proposed shutting down the bridges and BART (public transportation) while individuals locked themselves to various things. The Party member and his base fought against passive, isolated actions and for more collective action, and to organize to bring more people into the movement. Our line won.

Our collective leadership met many times during the occupation to strategize on maintaining the action's militancy and sharp political tone. We numbered about 50 people. As we occupied City Hall, the police tore down the hunger strikers' camp in the Mission district. Hundreds of people turned out to try to salvage the camp. Our collective met again and debated whether we should

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**ELECTIONS WON'T FIX
CAPITALISM**

**FIGHT FOR
COMMUNIST
REVOLUTION**



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OUR FIGHT

★Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

► the dictatorship of the working class — communism — can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today’s world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

★Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world’s workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

★While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim “communism is dead,” capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

★Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society’s benefits and burdens.

★Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of “race.” Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

★Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women — sexism — and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

★Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

★Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion’s false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

★Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP’s criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a “following” around any particular individual.

While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual’s writing of an article.

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Editorial

The Next Imperialist-in-Chief

The remaining U.S. presidential candidates—Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton, and Bernie Sanders—all aspire to be the next master of U.S. imperialism. The next president will be expected to unify the bosses’ ranks while beating discipline into a disaffected working class—all to prepare for an impending global conflict with imperialist rivals like China or Russia or both. All three candidates reflect the movement of the capitalist ruling class toward fascism, the stage of capitalism in crisis and decay, when the bosses’ sham democracy no longer serves their needs (see page 6).

The good news: These conditions are also ripe for building a communist movement by Progressive Labor Party.

Imperialism Drives Fascist Path

The latest electoral circus is unfolding amid a sharpening, high-stakes competition that challenges the U.S. in every corner of the globe. China is pushing for control of the South China Sea; Russia is inserting troops into the Ukraine. In Syria, a vital crossroads in the oil-rich Middle East, Russia is quickly becoming the dominant imperialist.

The rulers’ move away from liberal capitalist democracy and toward fascism is compelled by their need to prepare for the coming world war while extracting even more profit from the labor of the working class. It’s the bosses’ last gasp to save monopoly capitalism. For the international working class, this trend translates into increased racist unemployment, lower real wages, dysfunctional schools, mass deportations, more open state terror against working-class women and men, and hyper-nationalist politics backed by a swollen military and militarized police forces.

No Unity Among Thieves

As the U.S. bosses struggle to maintain their status as the world’s most profitable—and lethal—imperialist power, they are hobbled by infighting. The main finance capital wing, represented by giant banks like JPMorgan Chase and oil companies like ExxonMobil, is committed to U.S. hegemony in the Middle East and worldwide. The subordinate wing of U.S. capitalists, represented by Koch Industries, its Tea Party allies, and other domestically focused bosses, are less willing to foot the tax bill for an even larger Middle East ground war. Meanwhile, some new-generation, Silicon Valley billionaires seem up for grabs—or coercion. The bosses’ factional fault lines are deep, complex and fluid.

The battle between these capitalist factions is playing out in the U.S. Congress, the military, the presidential election, and the mass movements they’re trying to build to mobilize the working class to their side.

Splits in the ruling class matter. The better we understand the current crisis of capitalism, the better we can turn attacks on the working class into opportunities to smash the bosses and build communism. At the outset, we must smash the illusion of a “lesser evil” in this capitalist election dogfight. Whatever their differences, all bosses are dedicated to the exploitation of the international working class. All of them are ready and willing to intensify their murderous oppression of workers in the U.S. and throughout the world. All of them—and the politicians they use to confuse and mislead us—are our mortal class enemies.

Why Trump Matters

Donald Trump stands to become the first openly racist and sexist major-party presidential nominee of the modern era. In contrast to George H.W. Bush or Bill Clinton, who coded their racist appeals as candidates into “acceptable” language, Trump brazenly vilifies and scapegoats Mexican workers, Muslims, and undocumented immigrants. He routinely insults women. He calls for mob violence against anti-racist protesters, a hallmark of rising fascism. Trump has done his best to undermine working-class unity, the main threat to the capitalist bosses.

For the rulers. elections are a critical tool both to keep workers tied to capitalist ideology and to sort out their own differences. While hardly the main wing’s first choice among Republicans, Trump has succeeded in splitting the base of the Tea Party. He has effectively poached masses of workers organized by Koch-funded groups (Bloomberg, 11/20/15).

Trump’s volatility and constantly shifting positions may seem to cloud his ultimate allegiances. But his growing support among mainstream Republicans, along with his appointment of second-generation Wall Streeter Steven Mnuchin as his national finance chairman, suggests that the main capitalist wing will be banking on one of two contingencies. Either Trump will lose the general election (as of now, the likelier eventuality), or he will win and the biggest bosses will find a way to control him.

The Danger of Hillary Clinton

In the meantime, Trump’s public gutter racism has helped embolden President Barack Obama to escalate the sexist, racist deportations of women and children fleeing capitalist violence in Central America. (Over a recent six-month period, as the New York Times reported on May 13, the capture of families at the southwest border was up 131 percent over the same period a year earlier.) Looking forward, Trump’s extreme racist rhetoric will give Hillary Clinton cover to “more safely embrace the Bill Clinton years,” an administration responsible for the mass incarceration of Black workers and a welfare system overhaul “that cut federal assistance to the poor by nearly \$55 billion over six years” (NYT, 5/17).

By scapegoating, brutalizing, and impoverishing the most vulnerable U.S. workers, Bill Clinton advanced the bosses’ move toward fascism in the 1990s. (It’s a long process!) Regardless of who is elected in November, we can expect this trend to accelerate.

Hillary Clinton, the likely Democratic candidate, is an established stooge of finance capital. No active U.S. politician is more experienced at attacking the working class domestically or internationally (see CHALLENGE, 3/23). As a U.S. senator, Clinton backed the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan that killed more than a million to maintain U.S. control over Middle East oil. As Obama’s secretary of state, she engineered the devastation of millions in Syria, Libya, Haiti and Honduras. The New York Times, the leading mouthpiece of the bosses’ main wing, has applauded Clinton for her decades of service to U.S. imperialism (NYT, 4/21).

From the bosses’ point of view, Clinton’s negatives are her broad unpopularity among young workers and students and her weakness for fat speaking fees (read: bribes) from Wall Street banks like Goldman Sachs. Could she sell a military draft, a necessity for a global ground war? Could she mobilize a mass movement for fascism? It seems unlikely but, again, the shift to fascism is a long-term process. A holding pattern under Hillary may be the best the bosses can do for the next four years.

How Workers Get Berned

For left-leaning workers and youth, Bernie Sanders is a deadly choice. More than any other candidate, he has used his “outsider” status to set forth the fascist agenda the U.S. rulers need to remain top-dog imperialists—even if most of them are not yet ready to accept it. Beyond their own disunity and lack of discipline, the bosses must surmount the Vietnam Syndrome, a working class that is weary of “war and remain[s] suspicious of foreign entanglements” (NYT, 4/21).

Much of Sanders’ platform is designed to bring the finance bosses into line. His push to raise taxes on corporations and the wealthy, eliminate offshore tax havens, increase regulation of Wall Street, and improve

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West Wednesdays Resist Racist Terror on Campus



BALTIMORE, May 4—The cops have yet again exposed themselves as the dogs of the ruling class. Today was the commemoration of four students getting shot to death by National Guard soldiers during a protest at Kent State University in 1970. Today, following in those fascist footsteps, kkkops at Morgan State University (MSU) arrested a protester for leading chants during the 145th West Wednesday rally demanding justice for Tyrone West and for all victims of police terror.

This rally on the campus and the rally on the sidewalk just outside MSU, a historically Black university, focused on the deadly role of campus cop David Lewis, who participated with City cops in the police murder of Tyrone West on July 18, 2013. The Black campus cops and an MSU boss Floyd Taliaferro, Director of University Center & Student Activities, were apathetic about MSU's own cop's participation in the murder of Tyrone.

Before this evening's arrest, West Wednesday protestors marched across campus and entered

the student center, by the display of former MSU students in the civil rights movement of the 1960s.

Trying to Intimidate Us

The order to aggressively force the protestors out of the student center came without warning. This student is now facing multiple charges. The criminal injustice system sent him to jail and held him overnight at Central Booking. Other MSU students in the group were harassed by the cops and told to report to the campus police station the next morning.

West Wednesday protestors, including PLP members, took turns waiting at Central Booking until our friend was released the next day.

The group of protestors learned yet again that cops, Black or white, carry out the bosses' orders and do not "serve and protect" either students or workers. This is a significant lesson, as we are in a city where the majority of cops are Black. As the chant says, "White cop, Black cop, all the same! Racist terror is the name of their game!"

Murder of Tyrone

According to witnesses, overweight David Lewis deliberately and forcefully sat on Tyrone while Tyrone, lying on the ground, breathed his last breath, dying from positional asphyxiation after being beaten, tased, maced, and kicked by at least 11 vicious animals, aka Baltimore kkkops.

Earlier this week the West family held a press conference to announce new evidence as part of the vigorous effort to force a re-opening of the case, and to win criminal charges against the racist killer cops.

An outside re-evaluation of the autopsy stated that positional asphyxiation was actually the likely cause of death, even though the official, dishonest medical examiner's report listed the cause of death as undetermined, with a likelihood of causation by dehydration and cardiac arrest, due to a conduction defect.

Build Communism

All of this occurred less than a week after some fighters from the West Wednesday travelled to New York City to participate in the revolutionary May Day march led by Progressive Labor Party.

The most important measure of success in the fight against police terror, or in any other reform struggle, is the growth of communist understanding and the growth of Progressive Labor Party.

That's the development that enables us to be stronger and stronger in future struggles, including the fight to entirely defeat capitalism and build, instead, the egalitarian world of sisterhood and brotherhood that we urgently need!✊

Protesters Shout Down, Force Back KKKops

BROOKLYN, April 21—"How dare you care more about some traffic than my daughter's life?" screamed Kyam Livingston's mother Anita Neal in a kkkop's face as protestors took over an intersection and refused to move, despite the kkkops' attempts to clear us out. As the rally held its ground, our chants rang out: "if we don't get it, shut it down! For Kyam, shut it down!" Pedestrians on the sidewalks stood and watched, cheering and applauding the act of standing up to the police.

Members of Progressive Labor Party joined with the Justice for Kyam Livingston Committee in this monthly demonstration, demanding that those responsible for the death of 37-year-old Kyam be charged for their racist crime. We have joined family and friends in fighting back against this example of systemic racial injustice every month, and more, since Kyam's death July 21, 2013. We called out the whole rotten racist capitalist system as the reason there is no justice for Kyam and other victims of kkkop terror.

Today, Brooklyn District Attorney Kenneth Thompson came under withering fire for his failure to bring any charges against the NYPD cops who were Kyam's jailers. They refused her pleas for medical attention and are thus responsible for her death. Thompson has shown his loyalty to this racist system and the police force that serves it. A PL speaker linked Kyam's death to the other police murders that have taken place just down Church Avenue where we stood. Shantel Davis and Kiki Gray were killed by NYPD and no charges were

brought in these cases as well. Outrage was expressed at the Brooklyn DA's recommendation that killer kkkop Peter Liang serve no jail time after he was convicted of murdering Akai Girely.

Fight with Multiracial Unity

The anger over inaction by the DA boiled over as Kyam's mother led the crowd into the street. Traffic stopped and drivers waited for balloons to be released. One bus driver gave us a raised fist of approval. After holding our ground against the pressure from the cops, they eventually were forced to back down! The march slowly returned to the rally location on the sidewalk. A young Black man approached us and asked, in awe, how we were able to get them to back off. A PL'er and member of the Kyam Committee responded simply, "multi-racial unity."

Indeed, what do the bosses and their Killer kkkops fear the most? A united multi-racial working class that is angry and ready to fight back!

PLers called on anti-racist fighters to join our May Day March happening later that month in an anti-police murder contingent. Destroying this



evil system, it was pointed out, and building an egalitarian anti-racist, anti-sexist system is the only way we will get justice.

PLP salutes all of the families who are fighting back. We planned to join the rally called by Brooklyn Legal Aide Lawyers and members of the Girely family protesting DA Thompson's choice to give no jail time to the convicted killer cop.

Fighting back for justice is an important and necessary thing but fighting to overthrow capitalism is the fight that will end racist police terror once and for all.

We will be back on May 21 and ask anti-racist fighters to join us there!✊

INTERNATIONAL MAY DAYS

MEXICO

On May 1, 30 enthusiastic and militant comrades carried red flags, banners with messages related to the International Workers' Day and communist revolution, and chanted revolutionary PLP slogans, all well-received by workers. We handed out 7,000 flyers denouncing the fascist conditions faced by Mexico's working class and workers worldwide and offered the Party's solution. Lastly, we made plans to continue the struggle. Following is the flyer we distributed.

Smash Capitalist Hell with International Working-Class Unity

Under capitalism our minds are chained to the racism, individualism, nationalism and sexism of the system. These ideological chains, in addition to dividing us, weaken our forces as a working class. The May Day celebration is a call for the international unity of the whole working class to shed the nationalist yoke and fight for an egalitarian society: communism

Capitalism wreaks havoc on the life of the working class, through exploitation, misery, violence, hopelessness and death, out of which it generates tremendous profits for the capitalists.

Due to the labor reform, working conditions in Mexico are increasingly unstable; workers must work longer hours for lower salaries. According to the Autonomous National University of Mexico Center for Multidisciplinary Analysis (CAM), 66 percent of the employed population earn minimum salaries or less.

In another study, CAM reports that in 33 years the earning power of salaries has accumulated a loss of 79.20 percent, which means that to purchase basic necessities workers must work 52 hours a week.

Amongst the countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) workers here work the most hours annually, with an average of 2,226 hours, but have the lowest salaries, averaging \$12,850 a year, or \$1.01 an hour. This is less than half of what a worker earns in Chile.

Mexican capitalists and their politicians have turned the working class here into the most exploited, impoverished and cheapest in the world, a condition allowing them to reap the greatest profits, attract investors and compete with the bosses elsewhere, such as those in China.

Conditions are even worse for the nearly 6.6 million workers who are unemployed or lack adequate employment. Capitalism will not provide employment or education to 7.5 million youth between 15 to 29 years of age who are the most vulnerable to capitalism's individualistic culture. Ultimately many end up murdered or criminalized by the bosses' media, according to the national Institute of Statistics and Geography.

As workers' misery increases, so do the bosses' profits and all their luxuries. According to La Jornada (3/14/2016), by the end of 2015 profits for Mexico's leading corporations increased 8 percent.

As the exploitation intensifies and profits increase, the gap between rich and poor grows.

Mexico is one of the most unequal countries in the world. One percent of the population owns 43 percent of all the country's wealth. According to Oxfam, half the population lives in poverty.

Workers who struggle against these injustices, fighting for their rights, suffer disappearances, murders, repression or jailing, as was the case of the CNTE teachers, student teachers, electricians, IPN students, indigenous communities and Atenco peasants. When capitalism is in crisis, fascism is the order of the day

One might think conditions couldn't get worse, but the global capitalist crisis and sharpening of imperialist rivalry will lead inevitably to another world war in which capitalists will destroy the lives of millions of workers, the means of production and natural resources.

For workers, the fight against this criminal system is a matter of life or death. We must organize ourselves as a class as part of the international communist Progressive Labor Party. It's imperative to destroy capitalist exploitation to build a new egalitarian society.

Capitalists promote the idea that communism failed, but it's capitalism that has failed. The specter of communism still haunts the capitalist cultures and the communist demonstrations organized internationally by PLP are a beacon of hope for the millions of workers worldwide. The working class will remain exploited until we set ourselves free from capitalism; communism is the key to our liberation. Until victory!

Long live communism! Death to capitalism! For a revolutionary communist May Day!✪

ISRAEL-PALESTINE



ISRAEL-PALESTINE, May 1—In opposition to demonstrations organized by anti-communist organizations on May Day, Progressive Labor Party brought revolutionary communist ideas to the masses.

The first rally was in Nazareth, organized by the phony "Communist" Party. Despite being festooned with red flags, the message was one of making "peace." They never even mentioned communism. A PL'er distributed CHALLENGES and leaflets in the crowd to spread the real message of communist revolution.

In Tel-Aviv, there was a march of up to 300 people. PL'ers came with red shirts and several types of our literature, which were welcomed by the marchers. There were antiracists at this march, including an anti-fascist block that held a banner reading "Destroy Zionism."

On May Day itself, the Histadrut, the Zionist union federation, and related youth movements, as well as the "Labor" Party, organized their own march. It was a farce, as most marchers were from the liberal-Zi-

onist youth movement. But, a small block was fighting against the wage-slavery of contract workers. We marched with them.

Though the mass movement here may be filled with racist ideas, and the fightback may seem small, Progressive Labor Party knows there are always pro-communist people among the crowd. To the anti-racists, the anti-sexists, the anti-war workers and youth—there is another alternative to capitalism. We can't look to unions, liberal institutions, and phony communist organizations to bring the communist politics or the internationalism. They are all in one way or another tools of the ruling class—to repress, mislead, or outright attack the working class.

PLP stands for a world without profits, imperialist wars, racist borders, or oppression of women. We aim to build one world with a united working class giving leadership through PLP. With effort, we can bring more people to May Day next year and have the spectre of communism haunt the bosses and their agents.✪

COLOMBIA

BOGOTA, COLOMBIA, May 1—Over 50,000 workers, women and men, marched here on May Day, the International Working-Class Day, including 51 comrades and friends of PLP.

Early in the day we distributed 2,000 flyers and CHALLENGES and held important ideological debates with trade union and community leaders, explaining our political ideas. They invited us to strengthen their struggles with our participation and we invited them to join our revolutionary Party.

Afterwards, with our signs, slogans and PLP red flags we marched amongst the crowd chanting: "Peace between classes serves criminal bosses"; "Against the fascist state, communist revolution"; "Long live International Communist May Day"; "Capitalism is the problem, communism is the solution"; "Bring down capitalist nationalism with communist internationalism"; "Bring down capitalist dictatorship with communist revolution"; and 20 others.

Our slogans were in sharp contrast to reformist slogans calling for State pacifism and less corruption. The police watched over the march while the media filmed social organizations' and so-called trade unions' dance and music troupes which turned the day into a carnival, ignoring the ideological struggle and important historical significance of May Day.

There were also members of several community organizations, who invited us to debate their proposals. We called for working-class unity, the defeat of racism and nationalism and the building of our Party, as well as preparing for future struggles, given that the bosses' capitalist system can survive all crises as long as they hold state power. The overthrow of this system of exploitation is the only crisis the bosses cannot survive. The fight to achieve this objective is our Party's goal.

We militantly entered Plaza Bolivar and organized to maintain the security of our comrades and friends, since the Labor Federations runs the show and bars any participation. There were violent confrontations between the police and angry protesters who were demonstrating their opposition to the racist and sexist politics and wage slavery that divide us. The media describes them as "social misfits," when in reality it is the oppressive system which causes all the evils in our lives and will only be eliminated by workers' power and the international communist revolution.✪

Students, Workers Demand End to Exploitation



MARYLAND, May 6—Around 40 students and workers with the help of PLP rallied at the University of Maryland College Park (UMCP) to demand higher wages for undergraduates who work on campus. UMCP has chosen to pay students the Maryland state minimum wage of \$8.25 per hour rather than the \$9.55 per hour minimum of the school's county, Prince George's. Given the rapid increase of the cost of living, particularly of academic costs such as fees and textbook rentals, student-workers at UMCP have drawn a line in the sand and demanded an end to the exploitation of campus workers.

Despite constant rain, the energy of the multi-racial crowd was exciting. Speeches from student-workers and campus staff were interspersed with spirited chants telling our president of the university, "Loh, get off it, put workers over profit!"

We held high a banner reading, "It's our future too," a slogan meant to combat the capitalist-driven education system. We dream of a future of education without profits, tuition, and racist divisions. CHALLENGE was also distributed.

One student talked about how the new manager in one of the campus dining halls implemented new exploitative rules, such that workers could not take bathroom breaks or get a drink of water during "peak" hours of the day. Another student recounted how working three jobs off campus, a necessity because of the poverty wages paid on campus, had severely harmed their mental health and forced them to drop out of classes. Another student spoke of the constant state of being hungry, a natural result of living on only a few dollars per day.

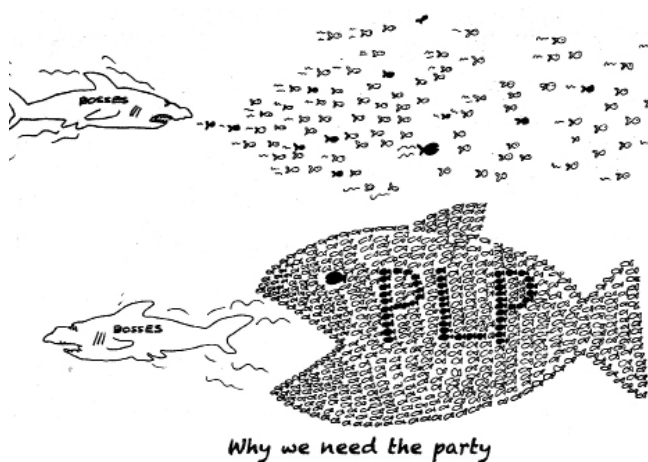
Then in a show of militancy, nearly 20 of us blocked traffic on Campus Drive, the main road linking the campus to surrounding communities, for 8 minutes and 25 seconds. Cops immediately appeared, but we were prepared. Two designated police liaisons talked to the pigs and bought us time as multiple rally marshals ensured no one was harmed by the backed-up traffic. The police had just pulled out plastic handcuffs and were issuing their third warning as we counted down our remaining 10 seconds. We made it off the street

before the pigs could lay their hands on anybody, visibly irritating them.

This rally and the confrontation with the kops are important for a number of reasons. First, student workers, generally considered outside the larger labor movement by reformist organizations have begun to organize and fight back, and have done so in a militant, disciplined fashion. Second, the solid presence of graduate undergraduate student workers with staff and faculty signifies that the political concept of solidarity is not lost among members of the campus labor movement. Third, through consistent conversation and practice, we have realized that organizing in narrow issue-based campaigns such as that currently being run at UMD can win students and workers in the fight against capitalism.

PLP will continue to work with these students and workers to bring communist politics to the forefront. We hope that through consistent struggle these workers and students will join PLP to rid the world of slave wages, poverty and all the ills of capitalism for good.✪

Solidarity with Verizon Workers—Join the Picket Lines!



NEW YORK CITY, May 14—The strike of almost 40,000 Verizon workers is entering its sixth week. The strikers are members of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW). They install and service Verizon's wireline telephone and FiOS Internet and television service.

This is an important strike in a time when strikes are all too rare. These verizons workers and their unions are up against one of the giants of the telecommunications industry. Verizon makes more than \$1.5 billion in profit every month, and CEO Lowell McAdams makes \$18 million a year. Last year, the wireless unit brought in \$91.7 billion in total revenue, up 5 percent from the year before, with a profit of nearly \$30 billion. The older wireline unit brought in \$37.7 billion, a 2% decline from the year before, with \$2.2 billion in profit.

However to meet the fierce global competition in the telecommunication industry, Verizon is trying to cut

labor costs by forcing workers to pay more for health care and outsourcing call centers to super-exploited workers in Mexico and the Philippines where they pay workers \$2.00/hour. In addition, Verizon wants to assign workers out-of-state for up to two months and keep their wireless retail stores non-union, all the while refusing to bargain a contract with the small number of union retail wireless stores.

Verizon is using supervisors from out of town to scab on the strike, and running help-wanted ads to hire temporary workers as strike-breakers. Strikers have picketed the hotels where the scabs are being housed and in a few instances have forced them out. But more needs to be done because Verizon is fighting back tooth and nails. Recently, the company cancelled the health insurance of the strikers to try to force them back to work.

Verizon is confident they can wear down the CWA leadership. After all, they did just that in the 2012 contract fight when Chris Shelton, who was Local 1109 President then and CWA International President now, convinced members to accept health care give backs and to give up pensions for new hires. Sheldon told workers not to worry because "...the company has barely hired anyone new over the last decade. There's no army of new hires waiting outside Verizon's doors." However, after a series of buyouts of senior workers and outsourcing by Verizon, there will soon be an army of new hires coming from the army of the unemployed black, Latin and women workers who largely make the up the workforce at Verizon retail stores. Verizon, with vault's full of racist super profits, is now coming back to exploit workers even more.

The striking unions are now calling on other unions, student and community groups to Adopt-a-Store and

Cops Attack Philippine Verizon Workers

Manila, Philippines, May 11—Today, a solidarity rally with Verizon workers from the U.S. and the Philippines was attacked by thugs, armed police and a SWAT team in the streets of Alabang, on the outskirts of Manila. The rally came to fruition when exploited local call center workers reached out to their striking U.S. counterparts for support.

The local call center workers work for Verizon subcontractors and make less than \$2/hour. Since the U.S. Verizon workers strike began, they are being required to work six days/week plus extra hours of overtime on their regular shifts. To make matters worst, they are not been paid for this overtime.

Call center workers protested by slowing down and by reaching out to the U.S. strikers on Facebook. This led to a plan to meet in the Philippines to expose Verizon's use of low-wage, outsourced labor.

join the picket lines one or two days a week. And we should. Although unions cannot solve the conditions of the working class, they are great channels through which workers can be organized for communist revolution. Moreover, adopting a store and joining the picket line is a great way to meet and get to know striking Verizon workers, who right now, are at bat for the whole working class. Through these means, we can have many discussions with workers, make friends and start to build relationships. This how a Verizon striker came to speak at our May Day march in Brooklyn. Let's join hands with our brothers and sisters in their fight against Verizon and one day in the fight to abolish capitalism in its' entirety.✪

U.S. Elections and Rising Fascism

The Next Imperialist-in-Chief

Continued from page 2

infrastructure and military efficiency are essential to the bosses' preparations for the next world war. Essentially, Sanders is echoing the call of billionaires like Warren Buffett, who see the danger of short-term greed to the long-term interests of their class. While workers are bled dry under fascism, the bosses must also take some of the losses, at least in the short run.

Sanders' platform is geared to win the working class to global war with phony promises to raise wages. Even as he criticizes Hillary Clinton's pro-war record, he endorses Obama's eight years of imperialist war crimes in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen. As commander-in-chief, Sanders vows on his campaign website, "I will defend this nation, its people, and America's vital strategic interests, but I will do it responsibly." As an "independent" U.S. senator, he "always supports the troops" [and] never opposes any defense spending bill.... Sanders is the darling of the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee and the right-wing Likud government of

Israel" (Counterpunch, 9/30/11).

Sanders' immediate appeal to the ruling class is his demonstrated ability to build a mass movement and bind disaffected workers and young people to the capitalist trap of electoral politics. A big part of "feeling the Bern" is the reform promise of higher wages in a country where median household income fell significantly between 1999 and 2013, even after controlling for an aging population and a smaller average household (fivethirtyeight.com, 9/22/14). Historically, however, full-blown fascism reverses any short-term gains for workers and devastates their standard of living, since the big capitalists are now ruling without constraints.

Capitalist-directed mass movements are critical to rising fascism; that's why the bosses are fighting to control the leadership of organizations like Black Lives Matter. The rulers use mass movements to pressure (or eliminate) rogue bosses, and also to enforce loyalty to the rulers' anti-worker agenda, often under a populist or anti-racist facade.

Turn Imperialist War into Class War

Workers in Ferguson and Baltimore have showed the way forward for the international working class: multiracial fightback. Led by Black workers and youth, these rebellions inspired millions worldwide.

World War I brought the Bolshevik Revolution; World War II brought the Chinese Communist Revolution. World War III, when it comes, will lead to international communist revolution—if PLP has organized a mass communist party to seize the day. In periods of impending world war, economic crisis and intensifying fascism, workers, students, and soldiers are wide open to revolutionary ideas.

Our Party is fighting for communist revolution because capitalism can never serve the working class. Only communism will smash the bosses' dictatorship. Workers built this world; workers know best how to collectively run it. We don't need politicians—we need communist state power!✊

FASCISM: DEFINE IT TO DEFEAT IT

Fascism is not inevitable. Fascism only becomes inevitable if the working class follows the line of reformism, of trust in the capitalist state.

—R. Palme Dutt, *Fascism and Social Revolution*, 1934

The Progressive Labor Party has characterized the current period as one of rising fascism, a transitional phase between capitalist democracy and mature fascism.

While we believe that capitalist democracy is still primary in the U.S., we can see elements of full-blown fascism in the:

- world's largest prison population and highest incarceration rate, with Black workers imprisoned at more than five times the rate of white workers;
- mass deportations and terrorization of undocumented families;
- routine police violence against Black, Latin workers and youth;
- militarization of police in places like Ferguson, Missouri;
- open, racist scapegoating of immigrant and Muslim workers.

Fascism is the true face of capitalism—the state of the profit system in decay, when the bosses can no longer rule in the old, "democratic" way. As rivalries sharpen among imperialist powers, leading inevitably to broader global conflict, the ruling class rips off the mask of liberal capitalist democracy within its own country. In a desperate effort to protect their capital, put down resistance, and raise funds and troops for war, they turn to naked intimidation and open state terror—to unrestricted rule.

The transition from capitalist democracy to fascism is a natural process of capitalist dictatorship. It's a deadly mistake to view one as contradictory to the other. While liberal democracy is the characteristic form of rising capitalism, fascism is the deepest form of monopoly capitalism, in which a small group of corporations and billionaires con-

trol the lion's share of a society's wealth.

While the phenomenon is best known for its bestial manifestation in Nazi Germany in the 1930s and '40s, fascists of that era also seized state power in Italy, Japan, Spain, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Portugal, and found willing collaborators for fascist regimes in France, China, Denmark, Norway, and more than a dozen other countries.

The particularities of fascism may vary, and there is no way to predict the precise form it could take in the U.S. But history points to certain critical elements of capitalist dictatorship in its most transparent form:

- Fascism typically begins with ruthless disciplining within the ruling class, to bring unity to its ranks. In Germany, in 1934, the main wing of the Nazis exterminated the rabid SA paramilitary (the Brown Shirts), whose leadership had called for nationalization of major industries and was viewed as a threat by Krupp, IG Farben, and other major German companies and banks. In today's U.S., the big finance capitalists, the main wing of the U.S. ruling class, will

eventually either bring the Tea Party wing (including the Koch brothers) to heel, or eliminate it.

- Fascism is characterized by intensified racism, sexism, and nationalism, a wholesale attack on workers' living standards, and ultimately the mass murder of workers both internally and through imperialist war. It uses these tactics to target and destroy sections of the working class—the ultimate exercise of divide-and-conquer.
- For the bosses, fascism is a temporary solution to the perpetual crisis of capitalist overproduction—it weeds out the competition. The slaughter of workers and wholesale destruction of industry during World War II paved the way for the "post-war prosperity" of the 1950s and '60s, when capitalists in the U.S. and Europe hauled in record profits.
- The fascists' next step is to attack the one force with the potential to defeat them. It's no accident that communists were the first to be sent to the Nazi death camps. With communists out of the fray, save for a small underground, it was far easier for the Nazi administration to round up Jews, trade unionists, and other targeted groups.

When capitalism has decayed to fascism, there is no turning back to the false refuge of liberal democracy. Misleaders—like the Social Democrats in Nazi Germany, or Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton today—serve only to foster illusions, encourage pacifism, and pave the way for the fascists. They must be seen for who they are: deadly collaborators of the big capitalists. They cannot be part of any anti-fascist force. Only mass, organized violence can stop fascism in its tracks. Communism—the dictatorship of the working class—is the only alternative to fascism. Only a mass, international communist party, PLP, can eliminate fascism for all time by destroying its capitalist roots.✊



#Frisco500 Rebels Seize City Hall

continued from page 1

abandon our action and try to help save the camp, or stick to our plan and have the Mission protestors help us. We decided that our action was more important at the time. Within 30 minutes, dozens of supporters were at the doors of City Hall, but the police wouldn't let anyone in.

We decided to pretend to call off our occupation, to enable us to open the doors and increase our numbers. The police completely fell for it. As we marched downstairs and found no cops around, we sent folks to sprint and open the doors to our comrades. Our numbers suddenly doubled. We now occupied the entire first floor of City Hall, and the doors stayed open. Over the next hour, our numbers continued to grow until we formed a line two-deep and wall-to-wall against the San Francisco Sheriff's Department riot squad. At the start of the day, only five people had signed up to be arrested; now we had hundreds lined up against the State. The Party member explained that no cops—Asian, Latin, Black or white—can be friends of the working class, since their job is to serve and protect the capitalist system and private property. Some occupiers, who'd previously thought we could appeal to cops' "humanity," came around to our position.

The takeover line was a beautiful thing. The youngest person was 15, the oldest 76. There were women and men together in a united, multi-racial group. We stood without fear and with love for those next to us, ready for whatever the police would bring. We chanted, "We ready, we ready, we ready for y'all!" When the police finally charged



with batons and riot gear, nobody ran or backed down. Everyone held the line—it looked like two football teams locked at the line of scrimmage.

After a two-hour stalemate, the cops arrested 33 protesters, 19 of them women. By then we claimed City Hall for seven hours, and the fear that often paralyzes our class had vanished. While in jail we sang, laughed and discussed revolutionary communist politics. My base jumped from five to 15. Comrades from around the Bay Area distributed PL literature and helped organize jail support.

Lessons from this action will continue to raise the consciousness of young people in leadership roles in these reform groups. The young people's multiracial unity has given them new political clarity. It has empowered them to challenge anti-communist forces that seek to marginalize them.

Youth are desperately searching for a Party like ours. Many are tired of the dead-end reform movement that has them chasing from issue to issue—one step forward and two steps back, with no real analysis of the forces driving racism, inequality, and inter-imperialist war. They know capitalism is the problem, but nobody organizes against capitalism like Progressive Labor Party. It is our duty to bring the Party's line to the masses; otherwise we allow them to be misled by the bosses' puppets. We can't let them fall prey to the Democratic Party and their suave preachers, liberal sellouts and revisionists. Put the line on the line! We are now organizing a fundraiser for one young fighter fighting felony charges. Please donate to our legal fund, and fight for communism!☺



RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

Below are excerpts from mainstream newspapers that may be of use for our readers. Abbreviations: NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly, LAT=Los Angeles Times

Soviet Union, not the U.S., saved the world from Hitler

Washington Post, 5/8 — In the Western popular imagination — particularly the American one — World War II is a conflict we [the U.S.] won....

But...May 9...mark[ed] the 70th anniversary of the Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany....

...Starting in 1941, the Soviet Union bore the brunt of the Nazi war machine and played...the most important role in the Allies' defeat of Hitler. By one calculation, for every single American soldier killed fighting the Germans, 80 Soviet soldiers died doing the same....

The Red Army was "the main engine of Nazism's destruction," writes British historian...Max Hastings....The Soviet Union paid the harshest price:...an estimated 26 million Soviet citizens died during World War II, including as many as 11 million soldiers. At the same time, The Germans suffered three-quarters of their wartime losses fighting the Red Army.

"It was the Western Allies' extreme good fortune that the Russians, and not themselves, paid almost the entire 'butcher's bill' [for defeating Nazi Germany], accepting 95 percent of the military casualties of the three major powers of the Grand Alliance," writes Hastings.

The epic battle that eventually rolled back the Nazi advance — the brutal winter siege of Stalingrad, the clash of thousands of armored vehicles at Kursk (the biggest tank battle in history) — has no parallel on the Western front, where the Nazis committed fewer military assets....

By 1943, the Soviet Union had already lost some 5 million soldiers and two-thirds of its industrial capacity to the Nazi advance. That it was able to turn back the German invasion is testament to the courage of the Soviet war effort. But it came at a shocking price.

In his memoirs, [U.S. General] Eisenhower... [said] "When we flew into Russia, in 1945, I did not see a house standing between the western borders of the country and area around Moscow...."

By some accounts, 60 percent of the Soviet households lost a member of their...family....We shouldn't forget how the Soviets won World War II in Europe.

U.S. hold immigrant kids in prisons

NYT, 5/3 — The authorities in Texas have granted a child care license to a federal immigration detention center where thousands of mothers with their children have been confined...for weeks...and...months....

The decision...drew outrage from immigrant advocates, who said it was little more than a prison. It was a victory for the Department of Homeland Security....

The Texas license strengthens the hand of the Obama administration as it tries to maneuver around...the rapid release of all migrant children and their parents....

...Said Jonathan Ryan,...director of Raices, a legal services group...that works with immigrants "if you want a child care facility, you don't contract with a for-profit prison company."

...The facility is a series of barracks...run by the GE group, a private correctional detention company....

...Immigrant groups have reported that even short periods of detention took a psychological toll on children, many of whom arrive with families fleeing violence...in Central America.

Imperialist Obama is longest warring president

NYT, 5/15 — President Obama came into office seven years ago pledging to end the wars of...George W. Bush. On May 6,...Mr. Obama has now been at war longer than...any other American president.

If the United States remains in combat in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria until the end of Mr. Obama's term — a near certainty given...that he will send 250 additional Special Operations forces to Syria — he will [be]...the only president in American history to serve two complete terms...at war....

Obama...would have a longer tour as...a wartime

president than Franklin Roosevelt, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon or...Abraham Lincoln....

...Obama has...approved strikes...in Libya, Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen..., a total of seven countries where his administration has taken military action....

...Said Eliot Cohen, a military historian,... "We're killing lots of people. We're taking casualties."

Home sale tactic rooted in racism

NYT, 4/29 — From the 1930s through the 1960s, most African-Americans could not get mortgages because the government had deemed neighborhoods where they lived ineligible for federal mortgage insurance....

The situation exposed black families to hucksters who peddled homeownership through contracts for deed, in which a home seller gives a buyer a high-interest loan, coupled with a pledge to turn over the deed after 20 to 40 years of monthly installment payments. These contracts enriched the sellers by draining the buyers, who built no equity and were often evicted for minor or alleged infractions....In the process, families and neighborhoods were ruined.

Contracts for deed are making a comeback....Investment firms...have bought thousands of foreclosed homes...and sell them to lower-income buyers "as is"...in Alabama, Georgia, Michigan, Missouri and Ohio. In one example,...investors who bought foreclosed homes at an average price of \$8,000 issued a contract on one in Ohio in 2011 for \$36,300 at 10 percent interest.

Contracts for deed make gouging possible....They...let an investor swiftly evict buyers for a missed payment, rather than giving them time to catch up, as required under a mortgage....They usually require the buyer to pay hefty upfront fees....almost never refundable.

Contracts for deed are similar...to the subprime lending that contributed to the housing bust....

...Many subprime borrowers who were wiped out — and who were disproportionately black and Hispanic — could have qualified for better terms and were misled.

MORE ITEMS AVAILABLE AT WWW.PLP.ORG

PAKISTAN MAY DAY: ONE WORLD, ONE FIGHT



PAKISTAN, May 1—“One world, one fight! Workers of the world unite!” Refusing to be silenced by trade union misleaders, members of Progressive Labor Party brought revolutionary communist ideas to marches and other May Day events across Pakistan..

Workers March For Demands

Various workers’ organizations held seminars, symposia and processions to celebrate International Workers’ Day throughout the country. PLers participating through their unions supported demands for a higher minimum wage, equal wage for women workers, and workplace safety. At the same time, they sharpened the politics at these events by chanting slogans against exploitation, privatization, inequality, injustice, poverty, terrorism and capitalism.

Another major May Day demand was to abolish the contract labor system. The reform struggle, also backed by PL comrades, is for every worker be given an official appointment letter that guarantees regular employment for a fixed period. With these letters, workers cannot be fired at the bosses’ will.

The union misleaders who oppose PLP’s organizing and calls for revolution remain silent about capitalist oppression. Unlike fake revolutionary groups, PLers connect the struggles for immediate reforms to the fight for the only true solution for the international working class: communism. The Party’s May Day chants, taken up by many workers, reflected our revolutionary politics: “Long live communist revolution!” “No to capitalism, yes to communism!” “Down with capitalist bosses!” “All power to the working class!”

PLers Fight For Internationalism

In conversations and struggles with coworkers, comrades elaborated on these chants. They explained the history of communist struggle and attacked the revisionist (fake leftist) ideas that wrecked the old communist movement. To build a world without exploitation, poverty, illiteracy and terrorism, we must fight for an international communist revolution under the red banner of the international revolutionary communist party, PLP

As PLP organizes women workers to play active roles in the Party, on the job and in the trade unions, the Party also organizes against sexist wage inequalities. On May Day, comrades denounced the capitalist bosses who want workers to believe women workers are inferior, to justify lower wages for women and

steal more profit. PLP fights to smash sexism by developing women leaders who will be at the forefront of communist revolution.

Local Struggles Build Anti-Imperialist Movement

Leading up to May Day, PLP’s work emphasized the necessity of unity within the working class and improved coordination among the trade unions. PLers have been organizing other trade union members to support workers of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) in their struggle against layoffs and privatization—an anti-worker attack by the Pakistani bosses and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), an arm of U.S. imperialism. PLers and friends have argued that if the bosses’ plans for PIA go through, it would pave the way for privatization of other industries like steel mills, the Sui gas field in Balochistan province in southwest Pakistan, and elsewhere.

The struggle for solidarity with the PIA workers is a powerful anti-imperialist opportunity for PLP and the international working class. The privatization of PIA reflects the sharpening imperialist rivalry between U.S. and Chinese bosses. The U.S. is eager to keep Pakistan as an ally, given its geopolitical importance in South Asia. China is even more eager to draw Pakistan into its own imperialist orbit and consolidate a vital economic corridor for One Belt, One Road, the initiative to expand China’s influence and increase exports throughout Eurasia.

The capitalist rulers of China and the U.S. (through the IMF) are both bribing Pakistan’s bosses with economic incentives to restructure PIA (Express Tribune of

Pakistan, 3/13/13). China’s most recent offer was \$500 million in aid to PIA, as well as new planes, technical support and construction of a new international airport at Gwadar, a strategic deep-water port developed jointly by Pakistan and China (Business Recorder, 3/30/15). Gwadar is located near the Iranian border and just outside the Strait of Hormuz, a potential chokepoint for oil shipping routes in and out of the Persian Gulf. Thirty percent of all maritime-traded petroleum—and 20 percent of the world’s oil, overall—passes through the strait (businessinsider.com, 4/1/15). In January, Pakistan’s bosses announced the privatization deals were being finalized (Business Recorder, 1/20).

What the bosses failed to factor in was workers’ resistance. Fightback against PIA’s privatization has been fierce, culminating in a strike on February 2. Workers battled riot police at the gates of Karachi’s Jinnah International Airport, leaving two workers dead and several injured. Flight disruptions and profit losses have set back plans by the Pakistani, U.S., and Chinese bosses (Nikkei Asian Review, 2/19). The struggle continues.

Our local struggles have an impact on workers all over the world. Workers in Pakistan are caught in the accelerating exploitation of inter-imperialist rivalry, an essential feature of the ruthless drive for maximum profit under capitalism. Since the surplus value that derives from workers’ labor is the lifeblood for groups of competing bosses, workers in Pakistan are well-placed to play a lead role in building an anti-imperialist movement. As PLP declared on May Day, only international communist revolution under our international communist party can free the working class from the daily miseries of capitalism. Join us!✊

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